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April 4, 2003

~~AFTER FILING~~  
Appeal Brief 99

*O.K. to enter  
7/4/03*

To: Examiner M. Alvo  
Group Art Unit 1731  
United States Patent and Trademark Office

Re: United States Patent Application No. 08/907,687  
Title: Method of Pretreating Lignocellulose Fiber-Containing  
Material for the Pulp Making Process  
Inventor: Marc J. Sabourin  
Our Ref.: ANDR/346/US

FAX: (703) 872-9065

FROM: L. James Ristas

MESSAGE: Attached please find an Amendment After Filing Of Applicant's Appeal Brief

NUMBER OF PAGES BEING TRANSMITTED 11 page(s) including cover sheet.

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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re patent application of: Marc SABOURIN

Application No.: 08/907,687

Examiner: M. Alvo

Filing Date: August 8, 1997

Group Art Unit: 1731

For: **METHOD OF PRE-TREATING LIGNOCELLULOSE FIBER CONTAINING  
MATERIAL FOR THE PULP MAKING PROCESS**

#H/BM  
36/4-7-03

**Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231**

Sir:

**AMENDMENT AFTER FILING OF APPLICANT'S APPEAL BRIEF  
(FILING BY FAX ONLY)**

As a result of the telephone interview initiated by Examiner Alvo on April 3, 2003, applicant hereby submits an amendment to the description and claims, and requests entry thereof for purposes of reconsideration and allowance of the application:

In the Description

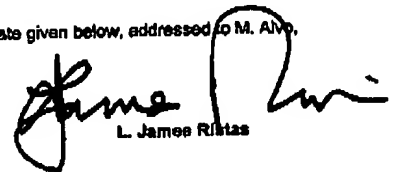
Replace the paragraph spanning page 1, line 9 to page 2, line 1, of the Background portion of the Specification including the indicated [deletions] and additions relative to the text as pending as of the Appeal on 01/21/03:

**Facsimile Certificate**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to (703) 872-9089 on the date given below, addressed to M. Alvo, Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

Date:

April 04, 2003

  
L. James Ristas

Two broad categories of pulp manufacturing techniques are known in the art. The first technique is known as the digestion process, wherein lignocellulose fiber containing material (wood chips) are treated with chemicals and heat in order to break down the structure of the wood chips and produce pulp suitable for use in the paper making process. A second technique for producing pulp, known as the mechanical pulping process, involves passing lignocellulose fiber containing material, such as wood chips, through an attrition device where the fibers of the wood chips are mechanically separated. Variations of the mechanical pulping process are also known and include the thermo-mechanical pulping process ("TMP"). In the TMP process, wood chips are fed into a pressurized pre-heater, treated with steam and are subsequently ground into pulp. U.S. Patent Application No. 08/736,366, filed October 23, 1996, "Low-Resident, High-Temperature, High Speed Chip Refining", (now U.S. Pat. No. 5,776,305) discloses a further variation on the ground wood pulp process, whereby the wood chips are held at a temperature greater than the glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) of the lignin in the wood chips for a period of time preferably less than 30 seconds, then immediately refined in a high speed disc refiner. According to the application, the wood chips are preferably subjected to a preheat environment of saturated steam at an elevated pressure in the range of 75-95 psi. (All values of pressure expressed as psi throughout this Specification including claims, refer to pounds per square inch gage pressure, i.e., psig). [(The assignee of the 08/736,366 application identifies the system and associated process as the "RTS".)]

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#### In the Claims

Amendment of claims 29, 31, and 36 showing [deletions] and additions relative to claims as presented for appeal on 01/21/03:

29. A method for producing thermo-mechanical pulp from lignocellulose fiber-

ANDR/346/US

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